

June 20, 2009

Hellooooooo, Charlene, By now, you're probably jumping for joy because you've received an impressive amount of camper mail at Camp Young Judea West from your parents and maybe even your brother plus other family members such as DA and of course GAP. Hurrah!

It's a smudgy morning with a tad of sprinkles here in southern California. I love June gloom because it's the best gardening weather, Today I plan to purchase/plant a small blood-red bougainvillea, a thorny vine, to add a shock of vibrant color to my cactus garden in the front.

The cactus garden is a couple-plus years in the making and several agave plants which DA (mailed one time and personally drove another) are the garden highlight. Ray dug up the plants for DA from his backyard. Even though the agave arrived rather dried out, they are primitive plants and possess an amazing inner strength for revitalizing themselves. I planted some of the agave at Nick's house, too, in the parkway next to the street. (Remember Nick [and Andy] are your cousins once removed). I thought a couple agave would never make it because they looked so brittle and mulitated but I placed them in the sandy loose ground anyway and helped them along with a special cactus mix.

Lo, all the agave eventually securely established themselves after several months. As the saying goes, year one they SLEEP, year two they CREEP and year three they LEAP.

Not to brag, but the Michael Plants/agave now appear to be in leaping mode and have even tossed out a few baby agave which are quite cute. Thanks to the thoughtfulness of DA, my cactus garden is unique with it's Albuquerque imports. I can't wait until they've grown extra huge at which time I'll haul in a couple of large boulders to show them off even more.

The camp I attended for several years, about age 14 to 17 was Camp Stonycroft in Shelby, Michigan. It was different because it was a camp for both girls and boys. The girls' cabins were at the top of the hill and the boys' cabins were at the bottom. In between was a large basketball court and the nurse's cabin. We all went: Patsy, Penny, Mike and Pete. The first year Pete was so young that he stayed in the nurse's cabin.

No outhouses. Yea. We had real toilets, basins and showers in the bathhouse. How fancy is that? Patsy/Pasty/Patti and I started out as campers and; over the years, progressed to junior counselors and then senior counselors who worked on the waterfront teaching Red Cross swimming courses. Swimming was our strong suite and opened a lot of employment doors for us. Later in college summers we were lifeguards. I lifeguarded two college summers for Prudential Insurance which had a fancy pool for employees.